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musical treatment, and are, like "Comolo" and "Elverskud," an oratorio—*en concert cantate*—for solos, choir, and orchestra. This kind of composition, which, as far as concerns its historical romantic subjects, corresponds with religious music, seems more and more to be one of those most developed and most frequently employed in our country. It may be dramatic, without too much combination of subject, but has not the pretension to be for the stage or for scenic arrangement, which often gives considerable effect, but, on the other side, makes it very difficult for the public to understand the piece from the beginning to the end.

The above-mentioned "picture of song," consisting of three parts, opens with a choir of pilgrims and women in the crusaders' band; a charming chorus, full of expression, describing the sufferings and troubles connected with the wanderings in the wilderness. The first melodies recall in some small degree Gade's own composition, "At Sunset." There is a repose like that in the above-named work; but this is a repose breathing itself out in soft complaints—a charming, characteristic composition; and the performance was fully worthy of the piece. The recitative summons of Peter the Hermit, the Crusaders' leader, precede the Crusaders' Song, performed as a solo, with recitative. It is a fresh, powerful, warlike melody; but perhaps the old French songs might have given the impulse to a somewhat more historical color. This part is concluded by an evening prayer, in which the hermit's voice mingles beautifully and most solemnly with the voices of the whole band; the full tones of the final stanza breathe the most fervent and pious longing.

The title of the next part is "Armida," which involuntarily reminds us of Gluck, whose opera calied by the same name, like this part, has taken the subject from Tasso; but the two works differ totally in construction and character, and there is scarcely any other similarity to be found in them. A strange, mysterious introduction, which in the most striking manner announces the black arts afraid of day-light, is followed by a singular little chorus of the spirits of darkness, who, at the command of their queen, conjure a charming fairy world, a flood of temptation for the most distinguished knight amongst the Crusaders, Rinaldo d'Este, who has left his tent to wander in lonely dreaming. The solo of "Armida" is original, particularly in the rhythm, and it changes into a lulling, enervating chorus of sirens, graceful as Weber.

The next scene portrays an ever-increasing struggle. The hero is about to yield to the temptation; then he listens to some far, well-known strains; inch by inch he strives to gain the victory; and as soon as he joins in the Crusader song the magic fascination is powerless and has lost all influence over him.

The whole of this part is, with regard to dramatic effect, most distinguished; the sudden change of time is more than a transition—it is the instantaneous translation from the seductive "Rinaldo, Rinaldo," into the manly melody of the Crusader song; the struggle in the hero's soul is masterly described. What a striking effect in the prolonged tones of the summoning horn; but these tones must be heard to be understood; *they cannot be described!* How different they are from Ossian's poetry, with the misty mountain air filled with spirits, or from the wild flight of the Knight Olaf for the elves! Hardly has Professor Gade, since in his youthful popularity he sang so delightfully of the sea-nymphs hovering around the *grotto azurra*, had any subject which at the first sight appeared so different from his artistic nature as the "Crusaders." It is one of the most imaginative he ever composed. And yet it is just the way in which he treats "Armida," that manifests his Scandinavian nature. How perfectly the subject has been managed!—how enchanting and bewitching is all the melody!—nevertheless, the excellent scenes are so moderate, so chaste, that we are not afraid of appropriating it as characteristically Scandinavian, appropriating it even with pride.

How sensual an Italian artist, or Meyerbeer, would have made it! How many voluptuous runs Wagner would have taken on his clarinet! Gade, on the contrary indicates with a noble and firm hand all that is necessary—nothing more! Even his "Armida" does not resemble Gluck's, who, amidst her thirst for revenge is enchain'd by fetters of love. Gade's is the cold, powerful being, defying everything belonging to the Cross. The music indicative of sorcery is charming as a forerunner announcing the arrival of the Queen of Spirits—the only point in which some influence of the Queen may be visible, but even here very insignificantly. How interesting is the composer's scoring down of the wand's strange vibration, and how well he succeeds. Some passages in the musical dialogue are, however, of too little coloring; at least we think so.

The last part, "Jerusalem," is, in comparison with the two first, a predominant religious picture. The repentant is joining the weary band of pilgrims as the hermit points out to them the long-desired object of all their toils. The Holy City glisters in the radiance of the sun, and a jubilee song of praise and thanksgiving inflames the host to strife and victory.

In those choral songs one beauty follows another; the morning hymn, with its gay awakening horns, restless in its construction as a breaking-up;—the pilgrim march with its all-overpowering longing, expressed in highly animated vocal strains;—the band's tuneful greeting to Jerusalem, imposing in all its plainness, evince at the same time a power to create, and an uncommon dominion over the means of art.

What a seriousness is glowing through these words of Rinaldo:

"O Lord, behold my anguish!" or the hermit's solemn admonition, joined to the last stanza of the chorus. How deep is the feeling in these low exclamations of "Jerusalem, Jerusalem," whispered out in rather reproachful tones, when the first overpowering enthusiasm has been silenced. Then there is a power of description visible in many passages; for instance, in the wild, sanguineous, ringing tones belonging to the hermit's last summons to strife. This part, less lively than the other two, and it may be so from the nature of the subject, is, nevertheless, not less interesting; it is a noble picture, full of profoundness, proving effectively that music has the power to describe great events in the world's history.

"The Crusaders" is in its totality, a precious, sublime musical work; one of those few masterpieces which not only stand the proof of a close examination, but are winning more and more the more they are examined. It is one of the most elevated products of musical art in our days, in which there undoubtedly may be some small imperfections, but we are not at all inclined to look out for them, and have only to present to Professor Gade our heartfelt and most sincere thanks.

DAGBLADET.

The above must be taken *cum grano salis*. It is full of the Danish salt. It is written by a Dane, and Gade is a Dane—a worthy Dane—a Thane among Danes, and a Dane among Thanes, *Poscimur.*

D. PETERS.

(From a Correspondent.)

MUSIC IN MEXICO.

SIR: The Italian operatic season was brought to a close at the end of January. The manager, Sig. Biacchi, himself a good singer, had got together an excellent company, among the members of which were Signore Alba, Sulzer, Płodowska, Signori Tombesi and Testa. Lastly, as the season was approaching its termination, Sig. Biacchi secured the services of Signora Peralta, who is here denominated the Mexican Nightingale. Verdi's operas have been well performed. The same is true of "Lucia," "Il Barbiere," and "La Sonnambula," but "Guillaume Tell" and "Les Huguenots" were frightfully mangled.

This, however, was not altogether the fault of the artists, but to some extent the result of necessity. In order to preserve the subscription list, the performances have to be varied as much as possible, and the pieces are of course imperfectly studied. Scarcely a week is given for rehearsing and getting up an opera. Under these circumstances, how is it possible to do justice to a colossus like Meyerbeer? This is the fault with which I reproach the manager. Had he restricted himself to his regular stock operas, he would not have been guilty of mangling this sublime music, and everyone, the singers and the public, would have been the better. The above remarks may apply likewise to M. Gounod's "Faust," which was very indifferently rendered.

I will now say a word or two about Signora Peralta. Signora, or rather Señora, Peralta, a Mexican lady. The day she arrived at Mexico, you might have fancied she was some great general returning from a glorious campaign. The enthusiasm would have been a piece of madness, really incomprehensible, had it not been in favor of a fair compatriot. Now you must know that Señora Peralta was rejected by the Parisians; they refused, without the slightest hesitation, to have aught to do with her at the Theatre-Lyrique. Her sharp, thin voice, to be heard, must be accompanied by an exceptional band. I confess that she possesses a certain facility of vocalization, but it is frequently injudiciously employed. It is like a number of rockets going off without rhyme or reason, and even conceived in bad taste. This young prima donna sang in "La Sonnambula," "La Traviata," "Les Huguenots," "Faust," etc. The enthusiasm was so great, and so much a predetermined thing, that the audience hardly allowed her an opportunity of singing at all. They took her at her word that she was the first singer in the world, and that no one, no, not even Adelina Patti, could equal her. After this, who shall say that no man, or woman, is a prophet, or prophetess, in his, or her, own country? But, whatever the merits of Señora Peralta, her engagement was, at all events, a piece of good fortune for Sig. Biacchi.

After speaking of the fair Mexican singer, I must mention the Mexican composer, Señor Morales, the author of "Ildegonda," a grand opera in four acts. The workmanship is bad, and the instrumentation defective; the whole is extremely slip-shod; you feel that the composer is continually striving to avoid reminiscences, and when he does come across one, he loses no time in finishing it in the strangest and most incoherent fashion imaginable. Amid all this rubbish, however, you perceive some few flashes proving that Señor Morales possesses a real feeling for music. This is especially the case in the principal piece of the fourth act, a piece admirably sung by Sig. Tombesi. It is, after all, extraordinary that a young man, who has never studied, and never enjoyed the lessons of the masters of his art, should have ever managed to write such a work. On this account, I cannot help saying that if he studies for a few years in Italy and France, Señor Morales may become a good composer. He left for France with this object, after the last performance of his opera. I wish him success.

M. DE T. D'A.

The Paris Conservatory is in a state of excitement. M. Auber has decided that a male professor of the piano shall be appointed in the place of Mme. Coche, who recently died, and he is determined no more female professors of music shall be appointed in the Conservatory. Public opinion opposes the eminent composer, on the ground that there is already too much immorality in the Conservatory, and it is improper to lead men into temptation, and to place girls completely in men's power!